# THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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## FRESH STRIKES KILL 70 IN GAZA HOURS AFTER CEASEFIRE DEAL ANNOUNCED

**Palestinians in Gaza reported heavy Israeli strikes that killed more than 70 people since a ceasefire agreement was announced on Wednesday night**

### 'NO CABINET APPROVAL TILL HAMAS BACKS DOWN'

Fresh Israeli strikes on Gaza come as Netanyahu signalled there were issues with the deal just hours after US President Joe Biden and key mediator Qatar announced it was complete. Netanyahu's office said his Cabinet won't meet to approve the deal until Hamas backs down, accusing it of reneging on parts of the agreement to gain concessions | P12

### TIGHTROPE WALK FOR BIBI AMID PRESSURE

- It is not clear if Netanyahu's statements merely reflected jockeying to keep his fractious coalition together or if the deal was at risk
- While Netanyahu is under pressure from families of hostages to strike a deal, his far-right coalition partners have threatened to bring down his government if he makes too many concessions

**94**

ISRAELIS ARE REPORTEDLY HELD HOSTAGE BY HAMAS IN GAZA

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

# India joins elite club with docking of space capsules

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

INDIA'S ambitious future space missions on Thursday received a major boost with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully docking two spacecraft in space in its Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) mission. The feat makes India only the fourth country to successfully dock two spacecraft after the USA, Russia (erstwhile USSR) and China.

While the docking happened at 1.00.04 am on Thursday, the scientists took time to analyse the data and confirm the achievement with images and videos before making it public. At 10.04 am, ISRO posted on 'X' announcing the successful docking: "Spacecraft docking successfully completed! A historic moment. Let's walk through the SpaDeX docking process: Manoeuvre from 15m to 3m hold point completed. Docking initiated with precision, leading to successful spacecraft capture. Retraction completed smoothly, followed by rigidisation for stability...India became the 4th country to achieve successful Space Docking," and adding, "Post docking, control of two satellites as a single object is successful. Undocking and power transfer checks to follow in coming days."

Although India's docking capability is late in coming compared to the other three countries, ISRO scientists said it was a more challenging mission. P10

**A STEPPING STONE: PM**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi took to X to congratulate the ISRO team. "Congratulations to our scientists at @ISRO. This is a significant stepping stone..." he said

# 8th Central pay panel gets nod

Union Cabinet okays proposal; panel chairman, members to be appointed soon

**LOOK BACK**

**6th pay panel (October 2006 – March 2008)** Introduced pay bands and grade pay. **Minimum proposed salary:** ₹7,000/month; **maximum salary:** ₹80,000/month

**7th pay panel (Feb 2014 – Nov 2016)** **Minimum pay** raised to ₹18,000/month; **maximum pay** ₹2,50,000/month

MUKESH RANJAN @ New Delhi

AIMING to enhance the purchasing power of its employees amid high inflation, the government on Thursday approved the constitution of the eighth Central Pay Commission.

The new panel is expected to recommend the revision of salaries and allowances of over one crore employees and pensioners. The term of the seventh Pay Commission will end this year.

Briefing the media after a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union minister Ashwani Vaishnaw said: "Prime Minister has approved the 8th Central Pay Commission for Central government employees. Its chairman and two members will be appointed soon."

Over 50 lakh Central government employees and nearly 65 lakh pensioners are the expected beneficiaries of the eighth Pay Commission.

Setting up of the new pay panel in 2025 will ensure that its recommendations are received well before the completion of the term of the 7th Pay Commission, Vaishnaw said.

The new panel will hold consultations with Central and state governments and other stakeholders before submitting its recommendations, the minister added.

The 7th Pay Commission was constituted in 2014 and its recommendations were implemented on January 1, 2016. It resulted in an expenditure increase of ₹1 lakh crore for fiscal 2016-17.

As for the new pay panel, employee representatives and leaders of various trade unions have had numerous meetings with the government in the last one year about its formation.

The masked robbers flee with the bag of cash, after killing a security guard in front of an ATM, in Bidar on Thursday | EXPRESS

# Bike-borne duo kills SBI guard, flees with ₹93 lakh

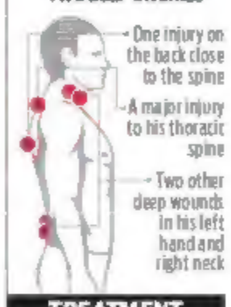
RAMAKRISHNA BADSESHI @Bidar

IN a broad daylight robbery, a security guard died on the spot and another suffered serious injuries when two motorcycle-borne masked men opened fire at them with a revolver and took away Rs 93 lakh in front of an ATM kiosk of the State Bank of India (SBI) in Bidar on Thursday. The robbery took place when the guards of SBI were carrying a cash box to the bank's ATM kiosk near the district court at Shivaji Chowk around 10.30 am.

The motorcycle-borne men tried to snatch the cash box. But when the guards resisted their attempt, one of them threw chilli powder while the other opened fire from his revolver. CONTINUED ON P4

**HOME INVASION**

**TWO MINOR, TWO INTERMEDIATE AND TWO DEEP INJURIES**


One injury on the back close to the spine
A major injury to his thoracic spine
Two other deep wounds in his left hand and right neck

**TREATMENT**

Surgery performed to remove the knife and to repair the leaking spinal fluid

**Team of doctors:** Neurosurgeon Dr Nitin Dange, cosmetic surgeon Dr Leena Jain and Dr Nisha Gandhi

**Saif Ali Khan is completely stable now. He is recovering well and is out of danger**

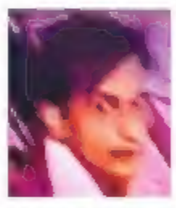
Dr Nitin Dange
Lilavati Hospital

# Saif Ali Khan stabbed inside home, is 'safe'

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @Mumbai

BOLLYWOOD star Saif Ali Khan was stabbed multiple times inside his home in Mumbai's Bandra early Thursday morning by an intruder armed with a knife.

Mumbai police said the stabbing occurred around 2.30 am on Thursday. The Bollywood actor is admitted at Lilavati Hospital, where he is "safe" after a surgery. Khan's attacker, armed with a stick and a knife, initially demanded ₹1 crore from his staff, Khan's public relations team said while confirming the burglary attempt. The demand led to a scuffle with the actor leading to the attack. Some family members were present at the time. A preliminary probe found that the intruder did not break into the actor's flat in 'Satguru Sharan' building, but sneaked in at some point earlier in the night through a fire escape staircase, a police official said.



CCTV visuals of the intruder

Khan's house-help, who raised the initial alarm, also suffered a minor knife injury during the incident, police said.

Under a barrage from opposition leaders and several actors on the deteriorating law and order situation in the city, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said, "...To say that Mumbai is unsafe is not right."

UT of Lakshadweep
Welcomes
**Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar**
Hon'ble Vice President of India

FOR INAUGURATION OF

**The Low Temperature Thermal Desalination (LTTD) Plant at Chetlat**

- An innovative desalination facility developed by NIOT, providing 1.5 lakh litres of potable water daily.
- Ensures clean drinking water for Chetlat Island, addressing salinity and water scarcity.
- Part of a larger vision, with 8 islands now equipped with desalination plants and more underway.

**Nandghar at Kalpeni**

- A state-of-the-art Anganwadi with child friendly infrastructure
- Dedicated to the holistic development of children, providing modern infrastructure, nutrition and a nurturing environment.
- A step toward a Suposhit and Sashakt Lakshadweep.

Nand Ghar at Kalpeni.

Low Temperature Thermal Desalination (LTTD) Plant, Chetlat.

In the august presence of

**SHRI. PRAFUL PATEL**
Administrator, UTs of Dadra & Nagar Haveli & Daman & Diu and Lakshadweep

**ADV. HAMDULLAH SAYEED**
Member of Parliament
U.T. of Lakshadweep

**3.00 PM | 17th January 2025 | Agatti, Lakshadweep**

ALL ARE WELCOME